

INCOMING TELEGRAM

Department of State

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Classification

Control:
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9332

NOVEMBER 17, 1958
6:17 PM

EUR
Info
RMR

FROM: BERLIN

TO: Secretary of State

NO: 353, NOVEMBER 17, 10 PM (SECTION ONE OF TWO)

PRIORITY

SENT BONN 306, DEPARTMENT 353, REPEATED INFORMATION PARIS 40, PARIS TOPOL 40, USAREUR 103, LONDON, MOSCOW UNNUMBERED.

REF: BERLIN'S 286 AND 288 TO BONN, 333 AND 335 TO DEPT AND USCIB'S UNN TEL NOV 15 TO HEIDELBERG AND DA (PASS DEFENSE AND STATE), INFO BONN AND USCINCEUR.

FOLLOWING IS CHRONOLOGY NOV 14 INCIDENT. ALL TIMES LOCAL.

SHORTLY AFTER 1300 SOVS DETAINED THREE COVERED US VEHICLES AND US SOLDIER DRIVERS AT NOWAWES (BABELSBERG) CHECKPOINT WHEN DRIVERS STEADFASTLY REFUSED SUBMIT INSPECTION. AT 1540 HOURS SOV CHECKPOINT COMMANDING OFFICER SUMMONED US ASSISTANT PROVOST MARSHAL TO CHECKPOINT AND STATED HE UNDER ORDERS INSPECT INTERIOR DETAINED US VEHICLES. TO US REPLY THAT INSPECTION WOULD NOT RPT NOT BE PERMITTED, SOV OFFICER STATED "MEN AND VEHICLES WOULD BE HELD UNTIL INSPECTION PERMITTED."

BERLIN TROOP COMMAND INFORMED OF FOREGOING AT 1600 AND, UNDER INSTRUCTIONS, US OFFICERS RETURNED TO SOV CHECKPOINT AT 1700 AND DEMANDED ON AUTHORITY US COMMANDING GENERAL D'ORSA THAT US VEHICLES AND PERSONNEL BE IMMEDIATELY PERMITTED RETURN TO BERLIN. SOV CHECKPOINT COMMANDING OFFICER STATED HE WOULD OBTAIN DECISION FROM HIS COMMANDING GENERAL AND AT 1715 MADE STATEMENT AS FOLLOWS: "I HAVE RECEIVED AN ORDER TO EXAMINE INTERIOR OF VEHICLES. I MUST COMPLY WITH THIS ORDER EVEN IF IT MEANS HOLDING UP CONVOY FOR ENTIRE WEEK OR UNTIL HELL FREEZES OVER."

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SOV OFFICER STATED HE WOULD PERMIT FOOD BE BROUGHT TO SOLDIERS. WHEN DELIVERING FOOD AT 1840, US OFFICER AGAIN DEMANDED RELEASE MEN AND VEHICLES AND WAS REFUSED. WHEN DEPARTING SOV CHECKPOINT AT 1915 US OFFICER INFORMED BY SOV OFFICERS THAT RELEASE AMERICAN SOLDIERS NOT RPT NOT WITHIN THEIR COMPETENCE BUT MUST BE DECIDED AT HIGHER SOV LEVEL.

FOLLOWING USUAL AFTER HOURS DIFFICULTY REACHING SOV KARLSHORST HEADQUARTERS BY TELEPHONE, USPOLAD PROTEST RECEIVED TELEPHONICALLY BY SOVS AT 1925 (BERLIN'S 284 TO BOWN, 331 TO DEPT). WHEN NO RPT NO REPLY RECEIVED BY 2100, USPOLAD DEPARTED FOR KARLSHORST. AT 2125 KARLSHORST REACHED BY TELEPHONE AND GIVEN FOLLOWING MESSAGE FROM GEN HAMLETT TO SOVIET COMMANDANT ZAKHAROV OR, IF ABSENT, HIS DEPUTY: "I AM SENDING MR FINDLEY BURNS IMMEDIATELY TO KARLSHORST TO DISCUSS WITH SOVPOLAD OR HIS DESIGNATED REPRESENTATIVE A VERY SERIOUS MATTER,"

MEANWHILE AT 2120 TELEPHONIC REPLY TO USPOLAD PROTEST DELIVERED 1925 RECEIVED FROM ACTING SOVPOLAD SHILOV:

BEGIN TEXT

IN REPLY TO YOUR MESSAGE OF 14 NOV, I ADVISE YOU THAT IN CONFORMITY WITH EXISTING PROCEDURE OF CONTROL, AMERICAN VEHICLES INDICATED IN YOUR MESSAGE WILL BE IMMEDIATELY PERMITTED TO PROCEED THROUGH CHECKPOINT NOWAWES AFTER THEY SUBMIT TO INSPECTION AND SOVIET CONTROLLING AUTHORITIES AT CHECKPOINT ASCERTAIN THAT ILLEGAL PASSENGERS ARE NOT RPT NOT PRESENT IN THESE VEHICLES.

END TEXT.

USPOLAD ARRIVED FRONT GATE SOV HEADQUARTERS KARLSHORST AT 2200, ACCOMPANIED BY SKILLED INTERPRETER BLOOMFIELD. AFTER REPEATED INSISTENCE TO GUARDS ON URGENCY HIS MISSION AND IMPORTANCE HIS SEEING RESPONSIBLE SOV OFFICER, CAPT SHLYCHKOV (WHO HAS PREVIOUSLY ATTENDED MEETINGS WITH SOVPOLAD) ARRIVED AT 2220.

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Control: 9387

Rec'd: NOVEMBER 7, 1958

6:51 PM

FROM: BERLIN

TO: Secretary of State

NO: 353, NOVEMBER 17, 10 PM (SECTION TWO OF TWO)

PRIORITY

SENT BONN 306, DEPARTMENT 353, REPEATED INFORMATION PARIS 40, LONDON, MOSCOW UNNUMBERED.

SHLYCHKOV TOLD USPOLAD THAT GEN HAMLETT'S MESSAGE RECEIVED BUT THAT UNFORTUNATELY SOVPOLAD MARKUSHIN ILL AND NEITHER SOV COMMANDANT ZAKHAROV OR DEPUTY SOVPOLAD SHILOV COULD BE LOCATED. USPOLAD TOLD SHLYCHKOV HE HAD COME ON MATTER GREAT URGENCY AND IMPORTANCE AND THAT IF ZAKHAROV, MARKUSHIN AND SHILOV UNAVAILABLE, HE MUST SPEAK TO SOMEONE ELSE IMMEDIATELY. SHLYCHKOV REPLIED "THERE NO ONE ELSE COMPETENT." USPOLAD ASKED TO BE TAKEN IMMEDIATELY TO SOV DUTY OFFICER AND SHLYCHKOV SAID HE WAS DUTY OFFICER. USPOLAD ASKED PROCEED SHLYCHKOV'S OFFICE TO DELIVER MESSAGE FOR IMMEDIATE TRANSMISSION SHLYCHKOV'S SUPERIORS. SHLYCHKOV REPLIED HE NOT RPT NOT AUTHORIZED RECEIVE MESSAGES. USPOLAD INDICATED THIS WAS NONSENSE AND REITERATED DEMAND BE TAKEN SUITABLE PLACE TO DELIVER MESSAGE. SHLYCHKOV EXCUSED HIMSELF TO MAKE TELEPHONE CALL AND RETURNED IN TWO MINUTES TO PROPOSE THAT USPOLAD PROCEED TO OFFICE SOVPOLAD IN ORDER WAIT THERE WHILE ANOTHER ATTEMPT MADE LOCATE SHILOV. USPOLAD STATED HE WOULD DO SO BUT IF IN FIFTEEN MINUTES COMPETENT OFFICER DID NOT APPEAR HE WOULD DELIVER MESSAGE TO SHLYCHKOV AND RETURN WEST BERLIN.

AT 2235 USPOLAD ENTERED OFFICE SOVPOLAD, WHICH OBVIOUSLY IN STATE READINESS RECEIVE VISIT. AT 2240, WHILE USPOLAD WRITING MESSAGE TO LEAVE WITH SHLYCHKOV, LATTER RETURNED TO STATE SHILOV WOULD ARRIVE IN 10 MINUTES.

AT 2250

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-2- 353, NOVEMBER 17, 10 PM, (SECTION TWO OF TWO) FROM BERLIN.

AT 2250 SHILOV APPEARED AND APOLOGIZED FOR HAVING BEEN DIFFICULT TO LOCATE. USPOLAD SAID HE AWARE HOUR WAS LATE BUT HIS BUSINESS URGENT AND IMPORTANT.

USPOLAD REVIEWED DETAILS INCIDENT AND EMPHASIZED US DOES NOT RPT NOT ACCEPT SOV CONTENTION THEY HAVE RIGHT TO INSPECT AND US WOULD NOT RPT NOT SUBMIT TO INSPECTION. STATED SOV DETENTION US SOLDIERS AND VEHICLES UNPRECEDENTED AND GRAVELY VIEWED ON US SIDE. IMMEDIATE RELEASE OF MEN AND VEHICLES DEMANDED. (IN EVENT SOV REPLY NEGATIVE OR EVASIVE, USPOLAD INTENDED INFORM SHILOV THAT SOV FAILURE RELEASE MEN AND VEHICLES COULD RESULT IN SERIOUS CONSEQUENCES.)

SHILOV DEFENDED SOV INSPECTION POSITION AND CONCLUDED BY STATING THAT NONETHELESS ORDERS HAD BEEN ISSUED SHORT TIME BEFORE TO RELEASE SOLDIERS AND VEHICLES BECAUSE IT WOULD HAVE BEEN INCONSIDERATE MAKE AMERICAN SOLDIERS SLEEP OVERNIGHT IN TRUCKS. SHILOV THEN STATED FIRMLY: "I WANT YOU TO KNOW THAT AS IN PAST WE WILL CONTINUE EXERCISE OUR RIGHT OF INSPECTION. WE DO NOT RPT NOT INTEND TO INSPECT CONTENTS OF BOXES AND PACKAGES, BUT WE WILL TAKE STEPS NECESSARY TO INSURE THAT YOUR COVERED VEHICLES DO NOT RPT NOT CARRY UNAUTHORIZED GEAR. ALSO THAT LOAD CORRESPONDS TO THAT INDICATED ON MOVEMENT ORDER."

USPOLAD ASKED TIME MEN AND VEHICLES RELEASED AND SHILOV REPLIED THEY MUST NOW BE BACK IN WEST BERLIN.

AS USPOLAD DEPARTED, SHILOV REMARKED: "TROUBLE OVER INSPECTION IS WITH YOU AMERICANS. WE DO NOT RPT NOT HAVE THIS SORT OF TROUBLE WITH BRITISH AND FRENCH."

MEANWHILE AT 2215 HOURS US ASSISTANT PROVOST MARSHALL INFORMED BY SOV CHECKPOINT :

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BY SOV CHECKPOINT OFFICER THAT LATTER'S ORDERS HAD JUST BEEN CHANGED AND THAT US SOLDIERS AND VEHICLES COULD RETURN BERLIN. AT APPROXIMATELY 2230 HOURS VEHICLES RE-ENTERED WEST BERLIN.

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